

Symposium Report

Date and Time: 1:30 pm to 5:30 pm, Saturday, January 25th, 2020

Place: 10-301, Sophia University Yotsuya Campus

Title: Social Innovation Symposium - SDGs in Practice

Title of each presentation, presenter's name & affiliation

1. Jeehyun Park, Sophia University, PhD student

The SDGs Policy Implementation and the Concept of Social Innovation

2. Prava Kandel, Sophia University, MA student

Opportunities and Challenges of Urban Organic Waste Management: A Study of Organic Waste Management in Kathmandu, Nepal

3. Beatrice Melo, Sophia University, PhD student

Weaving A Global Sustainable Reality: An Outlook on the Textile and Garment Production En Route to a Fair Trade Fashion

Title of the keynote speech, speaker's name & affiliation

The keynote speech: *Social Innovation in Japan*

Robin Lewis, Consultant, World Bank and Co-Founder, Social Innovation Japan

Summary of the symposium

I. The aim of the symposium

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is a bulky, heavy concept, encompassing 17 global development goals. To have a proper understanding of what SDGs is aimed at and can achieve, this symposium is to link social innovation theory, one of the currently popular concepts in social development movements, to SDGs implementation. Social innovations are new social practices that aim to meet social needs in a better way than the existing solutions, resulting from, working conditions, education, community development or health for example. These ideas are created with the goal of extending and strengthening civil society. As these two concepts of SDGs and social innovation have much in common, SDGs-related organizations are bringing them together for mutual benefit. The UN now acknowledges that social innovation approaches are needed as mainstream tools for delivering sustainable development, alongside large-scale public and private funding, although until recently the term 'social innovation' has rarely been recognised or used. In addition, what makes the correlation between SDGs and social innovation way complicated is that SDGs were also developed through intense and widespread consultation, involving a large number of organisations drawn from all sectors, including governments at all levels, civil society, businesses and

academia. Thus, the goal of the symposium was to highlight the prospects and implications of social innovation in public and private sectors as well as cross-sector cooperation.

II. The summary of each presentation with comments by discussants

a. The keynote speech

The keynote speaker, Mr. Lewis, started his presentation by explaining himself and personal motivation for working as social innovation worker. Pointing at the vagueness of conceptual definition, he kindly tried to make the concept clear for the audience. Unlike a traditional corporation, the prime aim of a social business is *not* to maximize profits — it is to address social or environmental challenges. And unlike a non-profit, a social business is *not* dependent on donations or grant money to survive and operate. Profits in a social business are re-invested to increase and improve the business' operations, ultimately helping to make a bigger, more lasting impact. Thus, for him, social innovation means A novel solution to a social problem that is more effective, efficient, sustainable, or just than existing solutions. Looking at the more precise case of Japan, he pointed at three major challenges of Japan's social innovation - people (low societal engagement in social and environmental challenges), idea (lack of opportunities for meaningful cross-sector, cross border dialogue), and resources (lack of information, network, skills and support needed to make change). To give more detailed information, he talked about his personal career path to becoming a social entrepreneur and WB consultant while giving some examples of Japan in social innovation - circular economy, perhaps with an environmental focus for example. Introducing his own social innovation project 'mymizu' for a case of using technology for environmental good, he added some other good examples such as Loop.

b. Presentation 1

SDGs' implementation has met a diverse set of challenges. To connect the UN-level action to the individual level on the ground, the SDGs of the 2030 agenda, including SDGs-related top-down policies, go through some policy implementation process such as National Action Plans (NAP) reflecting the needs and priorities of each member state. With policy sets established at government level, local (or international) NGOs and CSOs work towards the betterment of society through trying to achieve the internationally and nationally agreed policy goals. However, in spite of phased, well-prepared and planned procedure of policymaking and implementation, the broadness and comprehensiveness of SDGs have rendered policy actors and practitioners

confused about policy priority. Plus, some of the policy goals may be at risk of being infeasible, facing institutional limits or a lack of sustainability, especially when there are some fundamental problems deeply rooted – only short-term access to a certain local allowed, a lack of budget and funding, impossibility of having a proper monitor and evaluation, and etc. For such limitations to be overcome, the bottom-up approach has been highlighted in listening to the local needs and reflecting societal demands for literally ‘sustainable’ development. On top of these two top-down and bottom-up perspectives, another new concept of *social innovation* is emerging in the recent dialogues and discourses on SDGs’ effectiveness. Starting with the explanation about the concept itself, my presentation will address research questions, including “How can the concept of social innovation complement and goes beyond the existing methodologies (e.g. public-private partnerships)?” and “What limitations and difficulties are expected in the social innovation-based SDGs implementation? And how can they be overcome?”

c. Presentation 2

Though the increase in economic growth and discovering convenient facilities are making our life more and easier, in the meantime we are degrading our natural environment and our activities are creating several environmental problems. As urbanization is increasing in the world, it brings together the issue like an increase in per capita waste generation and its management challenges. One of the challenges faced by the local body due to uncontrolled and unmanaged urbanization is the proper management of waste generated. This poor management of urban waste is causing not only public health and sanitation problems, but it is also contributing to GHGs emissions. According to the report by World Bank (2018), the waste composition varies in low-income countries and high-income countries. In low-income countries, more than 50% of waste generated contains organic waste. And, from the studies we can see that, low-income countries are the one having poor urban waste management practices like simply collecting and dumping without any treatments. This can cause several environmental and public health impacts. Since the composition of organic waste is high in developing countries and because of low calorific value waste generated, incineration cannot be a proper solution in developing countries. So, we need to learn that simply the transferring of technology from developed countries to a developing country cannot be a sustainable way of management. In Kathmandu, the waste generation is 466.14 tons per day, that means 0.46 kg per person per day (ADB, 2013) and when we see the waste composition, more than 50% of waste is organic waste (ADB, 2013). But there is

no separate collection of waste in practice and they don't have any practices of segregating after collection. So, all the waste collected by Kathmandu Metropolitan City goes to only landfill site, which is Sisdol landfill site. This landfill site was built in 2005 for a short time period like 2-3 years but is still in use because there are no any alternatives. The municipality has no practice of segregating the waste, so, all the waste collected by municipality goes to landfill. However, the municipality has a program to reduce the amount of organic waste, that is, providing compost bin to the resident in 50% subsidy and encouraging roof top gardening. But this project is not supporting to reduce the amount of organic waste in Kathmandu as expected. It seems that there is a gap in information dissemination. There is also a project for large scale composting by a private sector 'BioComp Nepal' in support with NGO Myclimate to compost vegetable and fruit waste from vegetable market in Kalimati. This project is successful in producing compost and also have a good market for their fertilizer. However, it doesn't include residential organic waste. So, everyday huge amount of waste goes to landfill, which can be on the other hand treated as a resource. There are different opportunities available for the management of organic waste. So, my research will be focused on what technology or strategy is suitable for managing the organic waste of Kathmandu, Nepal, what are the existing practices, what are the challenges faced and what innovations or solutions can be recommended. Since the transfer of technology from developed nations is not a sustainable solution, what community innovations can be used to manage the organic waste of Kathmandu and how to tackle with the challenges and find proper solutions would be the focus of my study. The management techniques that are appropriate for the area should be accessed instead of only transferring technology from developed countries. Previous studies have shown that without the appropriate study of the area and active participation of related stakeholder, sustainable management of waste cannot be achieved. The effective management of MSW is not only based on technological solutions but environmental, socio-cultural, legal, institutional and economic aspects should be considered as well. There should be active participation from the community and innovations required according to the condition of community is a key to successful management of organic waste. And the successful management of organic waste is related to different sustainable development goals like poverty elimination, sustainable cities and sustainable consumption and climate action.

d. Presentation 3

The Fast Fashion system – characterized by large-scale production of low-cost apparel goods in a short period of time – has an extensive impact in the world's

economy, environment and society. All the processes embedded in the Fashion Value Chain – extraction of resources, yarns spinning, fabrics weaving, design and manufacturing, retailing – are performed in distinct places around the globe. Through companies' maximization of profits by attending a high demand of cheap products consumed daily, the inequality gap between Global South producers and Global North buyers expands. Thus, it burdens the life of the workers constantly facing harassments in unsafe factory conditions to receive an indecent salary which is not enough – neither to live nor to provide to their families. In addition, the produced waste pollutes the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat as well as the ecosystems around us affecting the health of living beings on Earth. For that reason, discussions on social and environmental concerns are on the rise. Enterprises' conducts are now implementing practices to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) along with the Environmental and Social Governance (ESG) factors to measure their social and environmental impact, so they can act more sustainably to get support from international institutions and investors. Notwithstanding, social matters are harder to be changed, since the most overwhelmed, located in developing countries, has their voices shut and are kept invisible by the structures of a capitalist market. After the Rana Plaza factory collapse in 2013 – where 1,130 garments' labourers died and over 2,500 were injured in Bangladesh –, the tragic reality in which profits are more relevant than the life of human beings came out. The ascension of a movement that demands for an ethical fashion – concerning the social pillar of sustainability – led to the creation of a Slow Fashion production distinguished by higher quality, and consequently long-lasting, clothing. This presentation highlights the relevance of social justice through responsible production and fair trade initiatives as a transition of the current trade system in fashion manufacturing to one that can be more ethical – providing decent living and working conditions for the ones involved in garments value creation. To better illustrate this Sustainable Fashion production, an overview of the most recent declarations of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) about new plans to operate Responsible Supply Chains in Asia along with successful cases of social sustainability practices set by brands such as People Tree, pioneer in sustainable Fair Trade fashion, and Shokay, first socially responsible premium yak, will be presented in this article. Even though critics on Fair Trade mention the possibility of perpetuating the inequality patterns between producers and retailers; better working and living conditions, fair wages and gender equality are en route to be achieved through its practices for a more sustainable value chain. Weaving a Global Sustainable Reality: An outlook on

the textile and garment production in Asia en route to a Fair-Trade Fashion Transparency regarding policies, processes and costs through the production chain would enable a guarantee to the consumers that the manufacturers are being fairly paid. Educational development – including technical craft skills and entrepreneurial knowledge –, community empowerment along with collaboration between companies, governments, NGOs, trade unions, suppliers and producers, including workers' participation to co-create sustainable strategies are mandatory to reinforce the implementation of the principles of Fair Trade and Social Justice.

III. The result of the symposium

The guest speaker, Robin Lewis, clearly and explicitly use his cross-sector experience as a consultant of World Bank and a co-founder of a social organization in order to help the audience understand the basic norm and concept of social innovation with regards to the SDGs. Especially, his regional specific explanation of using Japanese cases was very helpful to give a concrete understanding of social innovation as a methodology of the SDGs. By presentation 1, audience and participants could have a chance to examine the complexly entangled relations between SDGs, the holistic and macro framework of global development, and social innovation - an emerging social development concept. Looking at the usage of the social innovation concept in policymaking and design, major policy approaches and limitations should be well observed before the other presentations on more practical insights and information. The second presentation helped the audience expand their knowledge on grassroots, community-based methodologies currently ongoing in the realm of waste management by giving an example of Kathmandu, Nepal. Presentation 3 on case studies and hands-on examples of social innovation in the fashion industry, the audience saw the role of social innovation and social entrepreneurs as an important one in the SDGs implementation process. Overall, at the end of this symposium, audience and participants could have an in-depth understanding of the current SDGs implementation and grasp the definition and details of the concept of 'social innovation,' which is one of the recent major development themes and theories with their impact on society.